

Media release

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VOTE Trust grant recipients named

Victorian Optometrists Training and Education (VOTE) Trust grant recipients have been named, with two projects awarded funding for 2016-17.

Dr David Hammond and Jane Duffy of Deakin University, and Khyber Alam, an optometrist in private practice, received a \$4,325 grant for their project, *Considerations when providing optometric care for Muslim patients*. The work utilises online e-learning resources for optometrists designed to enhance cultural awareness and understanding of the cultural needs of Muslim patients to improve health care outcomes.

A grant of \$6,293 was awarded to Dr Michael Pianta and Dr Laura Downie of The University of Melbourne. Their project, *Supporting optometry to translate research into practice*, aims to support practitioners in critical appraisal, and in the use of a new interactive system that allows them to easily keep up with recent research. The system assists optometrists with interpreting the methodological quality of research studies, and helps them identify high quality research they can apply in their clinical practice.

The VOTE Trust, established in 2010 by the Optometrists Registration Board of Victoria, aims to advance and foster the practice of optometry and related techniques, procedures and policies, principally in Victoria, through research and education to improve patient outcomes.

Optometry Board of Australia Chair, Ian Bluntish, congratulated the recipients on the high standard of their applications which he said would benefit Victorian optometrists and their patients.

'I commend this year's VOTE Trust grant recipients for the important work they are doing to improve Victorian optometrists' ability to practice,' he said.

Six applications were received for the grants by the close of applications on 16 September 2016. A total of \$10,618 was available for distribution in 2016-17, with almost \$98,000 in total funds distributed by trustees since the grant was established by the Optometrists Registration Board of Victoria in 2010.

Further information about the VOTE Trust and the annual grants can be found on the [VOTE Trust](#) page.